

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application.

Claims 1, 2, and 4-9 are pending in this application. Claims 1 and 9 are independent. Claims 1 and 4 are amended. Claim 3 is canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein.

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 7 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the early indication of allowable subject matter. However, claim 7 is not rewritten in independent form at this time because it is believed that independent claim 1, from which claim 7 depends, is allowable over the applied prior art of record, as discussed hereinbelow.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)/103(a)

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,511,620 to Kawahara et al. Claims 1-4 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawahara et al. in view of EP 759349 A2 to Miyajima. Claim 5 is

rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawahara et al. in view of Miyajima, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,173,490 to Lee et al. or U.S. Patent No. 6,544,816 to Lim et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Kawahara et al. patent is only available as prior art under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)/103(a) because of its filing date of February 23, 2000. A Declaration Under 37 C.F.R. §1.131 is attached, which states that the claimed invention of the present application was conceived and reduced to practice prior to the February 23, 2000 filing date of the Kawahara et al. patent. Accordingly, the Kawahara et al. patent is not applicable as prior art against the present invention. Reconsideration and withdrawal are respectfully requested of the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §102/103(a).

Moreover, independent claim 1 is amended to be placed in better form. According to claim 1, the clamper is capable of contacting an upper face of the work piece, which is set in the lower die, with the release film and closing the resin molding space. Since the release film sucking mechanism fixes the release film on a lower end face of the clamper by air suction, the release film can be securely fixed along the inner faces of a resin molding space. In addition, the resin is a liquid resin or a paste resin, which can fill the resin molding space. It is respectfully submitted that the features of claim 1, as amended, are not disclosed or made obvious by any of the cited references.

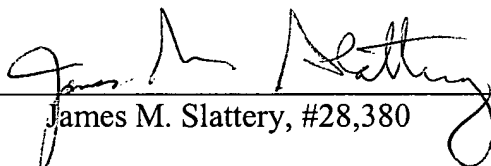
CONCLUSION

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Sam A. Bhattacharya (Reg. No. 48,107) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By 
James M. Slattery, #28,380

JMS/SB/gf
0038-0367P

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000